

## Message Text

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65-61

ORIGIN EB-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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DRAFTED BY: EB:NPAZDRAL:MH

APPROVED BY: EB:JLKATZ, ACTING

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 062797

LIMDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENDERS

FOLLOWING REPEAT DAMASCUS 1032 ACTION SECSTATE INFO  
CAIRO ASWAN JERUSALEM TEL AVIV 18 MARCH.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1032

LIMDIS

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, SY, US

SUBJECT: REPORTED SENATE COMMITTEE ACTION TO SLASH AID FOR SYRIA

REF: A. STATE 058898; B. STATE 054526

1. I WAS DISMAYED TO LEARN THIS MORNING FIRST FROM  
RADIO ISRAEL AND THEN THROUGH FRONTPAGE OF DAMASCUS  
PRESS OF THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE'S  
RECOMMENDATION TO REDUCE THE MIDDLE EAST SPECIAL  
REQUIREMENTS FUND (MESRF) FROM \$100 MILLION TO \$25  
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MILLION. IT HAS BEEN UNDERSTOOD BY SARG SINCE

MESRF WAS FIRST CONCEIVED THAT MOST OF THESE FUNDS WERE EARMARKED FOR SYRIA. CONSIDER THIS RECOMMENDED REDUCTION, IF CARRIED OUT, WILL SERIOUSLY HAMPER FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN U.S.-SYRIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS.

2. OVER COURSE OF PAST YEAR U.S. AND SYRIA HAVE WORKED INTENSIVELY TOGETHER TO FIND WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE SECRETARY'S PEACE-MAKING EFFORTS HAVE BEEN, OF COURSE, OF OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE TO OUR RELATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME SYRIA HAS SOUGHT OUR VIEWS ON ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN ACCESS TO U.S. TECHNOLOGY, ECONOMIC PLANNING AND BILATERAL ASSISTANCE. AFTER SEVERAL VISITS BY AID OFFICIALS AT END OF 1974 AND EARLY THIS YEAR, WE IDENTIFIED TOGETHER A LIST OF POTENTIAL PROJECTS INDICATING WHERE SYRIA COULD MOST BENEFIT FROM U.S. ASSISTANCE IN HELPING TO ACCELERATE SYRIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. IN WITNESS TO ITS DESIRE TO RAPIDLY BUILD A NEW RELATIONSHIP, WHEN FIRST \$25 MILLION BECAME AVAILABLE UNDER CONTINUING RESOLUTION AUTHORITY FOLLOWING NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS, SARG IN LESS THAN ONE WEEK'S TIME NEGOTIATED AND AGREED TO THREE SEPARATE AID PROJECTS TOTALING FULL \$25 MILLION.

3. SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH SARG ALL POINT TO ITS CONTINUING INTEREST IN U.S. TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION. SARG AT HIGHEST LEVELS HAS INDICATED ITS PLANS TO DEVELOP WITH US ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION ACTIVITIES FOR FY 1975 AND 1976, EVEN IN EXCESS OF ANTICIPATED AVAILABILITIES. HOWEVER, U.S. AND SARG EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD HAVE BEEN HAMPERED BY LACK OF FULL U.S. APPROPRIATION SO FAR IN FY 75, INDICATING PRECISE AMOUNTS OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

4. IN MY OPINION ONE OF THE MOST SOLID PROOFS OF SYRIAN LEADERSHIP'S INTEREST IN PEACE LIES IN THE DEEP DEDICATION OF SARG'S LEADERSHIP TO DEVELOP THEIR COUNTRY AND PROVIDE A BETTER STANDARD OF LIVING FOR THE SYRIAN PEOPLE. AT THIS JUNCTURE OUR DECISION TO SLASH  
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THE FUNDS AVAILABLE UNDER THE MESR FUND WILL SCARCELY BE SEEN AS USG ENCOURAGEMENT TO THIS LEADERSHIP TO FOCUS ON THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT. IT WILL CERTAINLY WORK COUNTER TO SARG'S WILLINGNESS TO ENTRUST ANY SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO U.S. ADVICE OR SUPPORT.

5. REQUEST WASHINGTON'S LATEST ADVICE ON THIS MATTER SO

THAT WE CAN ADVISE SARG ACCORDINGLY. RECOMMEND EVERY  
EFFORT BE MADE TO RESTORE FULL AMOUNT OF FY 75 FUNDS  
FOR USE IN SYRIA PROGRAM. ALSO SUGGEST SUBSTANCE THIS  
MESSAGE BE MADE AVAILABLE TO SENATE SUB-COMMITTEE  
CHAIRMAN INOUE AS WELL AS TO SENATOR MATHIAS, WHO HAS  
VISITED SYRIA RECENTLY AND WHO HEARD DIRECTLY FROM MINECON  
IMADI HOW MUCH SYRIA APPREICATED AND NEEDS INVOLVEMENT  
U.S. IN ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.  
MURPHY UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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## Message Attributes

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